

MAR 13 2015

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO
SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION TO EXPEDITE FAMILY
REUNIFICATION FOR CERTAIN FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD
WAR II.

1 WHEREAS, on December 8, 1941, thousands of Filipino men and
2 women responded to President Roosevelt's call for help to
3 preserve peace, democracy, and freedom for America and the
4 world; and

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6 WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines was a commonwealth
7 associated with the United States and its citizens were
8 nationals of the United States, similar to the status of
9 Hawaii's residents prior to statehood and the current status of
10 American Samoa's residents; and

11
12 WHEREAS, during the dark days of World War II, nearly one
13 hundred thousand soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army
14 provided a ray of hope in the Pacific as they fought alongside
15 United States and Allied forces for four long years to defend
16 and reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japanese aggression; and

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18 WHEREAS, thousands more Filipinos joined the United States
19 Armed Forces immediately after the war and served in
20 occupational duty throughout the Pacific theater; and

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22 WHEREAS, valiant Filipino soldiers fought, died, and
23 suffered in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II,
24 defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of
25 Filipino prisoners of war endured the infamous Bataan Death
26 March and years of captivity; and

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28 WHEREAS, their many guerrilla actions slowed the Japanese
29 takeover of the Western Pacific region and allowed United States



1 forces the time to build and prepare for the allied
2 counterattack on Japanese forces; and
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4 WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side by side with American
5 forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from which
6 the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and
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8 WHEREAS, in February of 1946, the United States Congress
9 enacted the 1946 Rescission Act, which denied World War II
10 Filipino veterans rights to veterans benefits equal to those
11 enjoyed by other veterans and soldiers of more than sixty-six
12 other countries who were similarly inducted into the United
13 States military; and
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15 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against
16 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for
17 denial of full United States veterans status and benefits,
18 including rights of immigration and naturalization; and
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20 WHEREAS, decades later, in recognition of the courage and
21 loyalty of the Filipino troops who fought alongside our armed
22 forces in the Pacific during World War II, the United States
23 Congress enacted legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from
24 certain immigration and naturalization requirements for these
25 Filipino veterans; and
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27 WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those
28 Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of
29 this country; and
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31 WHEREAS, despite the granting of citizenship, these World
32 War II Filipino veterans are still denied equal treatment and
33 status as American veterans by the Rescission Act; and
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35 WHEREAS, the 1990 legislation did not go far enough in
36 extending those immigration and naturalization benefits to the
37 children of those veterans, resulting in years of long
38 separation between the veterans and their children remaining in
39 the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and
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41 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed October
42 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino Veterans of World War



1 II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino
2 veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and liberty;
3 and
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5 WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and
6 Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law and, among many
7 other things, formally recognized and set the historical record
8 straight by declaring the service of Filipino World War II
9 veterans as active United States military service in the Armed
10 Forces for purposes of this law; and
11

12 WHEREAS, decades after their heroic service under the
13 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, men and
14 women of Filipino-American national heritage are still being
15 denied the benefits and privileges provided to their American
16 compatriots who fought side by side with them; and
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18 WHEREAS, the World War II Filipino veterans that survive,
19 are now in their seventies and eighties, and many are
20 permanently disabled and would, except for the Rescission Act,
21 be eligible for full federal veterans benefits and services; and
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23 WHEREAS, correction of this injustice to the Filipino
24 veterans who served our nation courageously in the fight for
25 freedom and democracy during World War II is long overdue; now,
26 therefore,
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28 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
29 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the
30 House of Representatives concurring, that the President of the
31 United States and United States Congress are urged to support
32 legislation to expedite family reunification for certain
33 Filipino veterans of World War II; and
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35 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
36 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
37 United States, President of the Republic of the Philippines,
38 Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Speaker of the
39 United States House of Representatives, Chair of the Committee
40 on the Judiciary of the United States Senate, Chair of the
41 Committee on the Judiciary of the United States House of
42 Representatives, Director of the Bureau of United States



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1 Citizenship and Immigration Services, United States Secretary of
 2 Veterans Affairs, each member of Hawaii's congressional
 3 delegation, the respective Chairs of the Senate Committee on
 4 Human Services, the House Committee on Human Services, the
 5 Senate Committee on Tourism, and the House Committee on Tourism,
 6 Culture, and International Affairs of the Hawaii State
 7 Legislature.

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